

CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

At a meeting of the **CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE SCHOOLS FORUM** held at Council Chamber, Priory House, Monks Walk, Shefford on Monday, 22 October 2012

PRESENT

Richard Holland (Chairman)
Jim Parker (Vice-Chairman)

School Members:	Anne Bell	Headteacher, Willow Nursery School
	Paul Burrett	Headteacher, Studham CofE Lower School and Pre-School
	Shirley-Anne Crosbie	Headteacher, Glenwood Special School
	James Davis	Governor, Leighton Middle School
	Angie Hardy	Headteacher, Clipstone Brook Lower School
	Sue Howley MBE	Governor, Greenleas Lower School
	John Street	Academy Middle School Representative
	Stephen Tiktin	Governor, Linslade Lower School
Non-School Members:	Mr M Foster	GMB representative
	Caroll Leggatt	PVI Early Years Providers Representative
	Robert Shore	Local Authority 14-19 partnership representative - UTC
Apologies for Absence:	David Brandon-Bravo	
	Mrs E Grant	
	Sharon Ingham	
	J Reynolds	
	Rob Watson	
Substitutes:	Mrs A Phillips	on behalf of Mr D Brandon-Bravo
Officers in Attendance:	Mrs M Clampitt	Committee Services Officer
	Mr P Dudley	Assistant Director Children's Services (Learning & Strategic Commissioning)
	Ms D Hill	Senior Finance Manager - Children's Services
	Mrs H Redding	Head of Learning and School Support

CBSF/12/60 Chairman's Announcement

The Chairman made the following announcements:-

1. He paid tribute to Mr Bill Hamilton, who had passed away unexpectedly. Mr Hamilton had been a long serving member of both the Central Bedfordfordshire Schools Forum and the Bedford Borough Schools Forum. He had provided insightful comments and moved the Forums forward in a passionate way. His wisdom and presence would be missed on the Forums.
2. The new Schools Forums (England) Regulations 2012 had come into force from 1 October 2012 and the DfE had prepared a Schools Forums: Operational and Good Practice Guide. The Guide had only become available earlier this day. The Procedures section paragraph 1.40 (c) detailed the voting process which would now be followed.

CBSF/12/61 Minutes of the previous meeting and matters arising**RESOLVED**

1. **that the minutes of the meeting of the Central Bedfordshire Schools Forum held on 25 June 2012 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record subject to the removal of the last sentence in the third paragraph of CBSF/12/55.**

The Forum asked for the categorisation of schools in the risk register to be reported to the 26 November meeting. However, due to the number of agenda items this will be brought to the January meeting, after school out-turn have been reviewed.

2. **that the minutes of the meeting of the Central Bedfordshire Schools Forum held on 3 September 2012 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.**

CBSF/12/62 School Funding Reform: Arrangements for 2013/14

The Forum considered a report which provided an update on the Funding Consultation with Schools and proposed the formula factors for distribution of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) for 2013/14.

The Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG), since 2006/07 financial year, has financed the Schools Budget in each authority. The allocation of the DSG is based on number of full time equivalent pupils as at January census multiplied by the GUF.

There have been three consultations carried out by the DfE relating to the creation of a transparent, fairer and less complex system. Two consultations "Rationale and Principles" and "Proposals for a fairer system" were held in 2011. In March 2012 the third consultation "Next steps towards a fairer system" was launched.

In 2013/14 the DSG will be allocated by being split into three notional blocks: Schools £142.5m, Early Years £10.5m and High Needs £20.9m. Whilst funding could be redistributed between the blocks restrictions would apply.

The DfE require that schools reduce the number of funding factors within their formulae from the current limit of 37 (Central Bedfordshire uses 27) funding factors to only 12 from 2013/14. The funding will be based on the October pupil census uplifted for the difference between October and January counts. It was noted that Early Years would be calculated differently based on three January Counts comprised of the previous January count, the current January count and adjusted at end of next year.

The MFG has been set at negative 1.5% per pupil for both 2013/14 and 2014/5.

The full Schools Forum met on 3 September 2012 to consider the consultation document. An FAQ document was also provided. The short response time required the early meeting of the Schools Forum. Articles had been placed in Central Essentials and Governor Essentials, and finance surgeries were held at both Dunstable and Shefford for individual schools to discuss their personal circumstances. There were 43 attendants representing 28 schools.

The Technical Funding Group sub group had met with officers on 3 October to consider the responses from the 58 schools (50 maintained and 8 academies). It was noted that where multiple responses had been received from a single school the responses would be counted as 1 reply.

A breakdown of the questions asked and the responses received were contained within the report. The Forum noted that the FAQs were updated throughout the consultation to answer queries that became evident.

There were updates provided on: the number of EAL students being 55 across Central Bedfordshire (which is low), the exclusion of the PFI would be revisited in 2014/15 and a new definition for split site schools.

The Forum considered de-delegation of school funds which would result in a service being provided centrally. De-delegation only applies to the maintained sector and removed the need for the DSG Local Authority Central Spend Equivalent Grant (LACSEG) for Academies, which will disappear in 2013/14.

The Forum were asked to vote, by phase, for the possible central provision of two services:- (i) Facilities Time (Union representation at meetings, etc) and (ii) School Contingency (Closing and re-organising schools, schools in financial difficulty, etc).

The Forum noted that Special and Nursery Schools were not included in the de-delegation as it only relates to the Schools Block, and not the Early Years and High Needs Block.

The question was asked of whether there would be a provision inserted into the scheme for buyback with middle schools and Academies. The Assistant Director Children's Services (Learning & Strategic Commissioning) confirmed that the LA were considering what models would work as a way forward. No decisions had been made yet.

The Forum were advised of the Growth Fund which would be used for funding significant pre-16 pupil growth and expenditure incurred in order to make provision for an extra class (to comply with School Admissions (Infant Class Sizes) Regulations). The Forum must agree with any funding being set aside, consider the calculations for how it will be paid. The unallocated funding at the end of the year will be returned to the DSG for allocation in the new year. The criteria and details of payment would be considered at the November meeting.

The Pupil Premium would be allocated separately to the DSG for 2013/14 but would be incorporated long term into the DSG. The 2013/14 amount had increased to £900 and was based on Ever 6 (Free School Meals).

The sub group had agreed the proposals before being brought to the full Forum and gave agreement on the completion of the proforma by 31 October 2012 for sending to the DfE. This would be a draft submission with the final submission being made in January 2013. Any revisions required will be brought back to the Forum.

The new budgets for 2013/14 must be made available by March 2013 but Officers are working on an earlier release date, possibly January 2013.

RESOLVED

- 1. that the School Funding Reform Consultation process, be noted. (10 votes in favour, 2 abstained)**
- 2. that the following factors be included for distributing the Dedicated Schools Grant School Block for the 2013/14 financial year:**
 - (i) Basic Entitlement for Primary, Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 (13 voted in favour)**
 - (ii) Deprivation based on weighted banded IDACI data (unanimous in favour)**
 - (iii) Lump Sum £120,000 (11 in favour, 2 against)**
 - (iv) Split Site £120,000 (11 in favour, 1 against, 1 declared an interest and abstained)**
 - (v) Rates based on actual cost (13 in favour)**
- 3. that those schools that gain due to the change in formula factors are capped at a sufficient rate to fund the Minimum Funding Guarantee be agreed. (Unanimous in favour)**

4. to agree to de-delegate Facilities Time for the following phases:
 - (i) Lower Schools – 4 in favour
 - (ii) Middle Schools – 2 against
 - (iii) Upper School – 1 in favour

5. to agree to de-delegate School Specific Contingency for the following phases:
 - (i) Lower Schools – 4 in favour
 - (ii) Middle Schools – 2 in favour
 - (iii) Upper School – 1 in favour

There were 4 lower school representatives, 2 middle school representatives and 1 upper school representative eligible to vote on the recommendations 4 and 5 above.

CBSF/12/63 Schools Forum Constitution and Terms of Reference

The Forum received a report which provided a proposed alteration to the membership provision for the Schools Forum.

In March 2012, the Forum re-elected its membership for three years and amended its Constitution & Terms of Reference to reflect the increased Academy representation.

The Regulations, which came in to effect from 1 October 2012, required the inclusion of a PRU representative, on the same basis as the voting school members. It was noted that Central Bedfordshire's PRU was officer led and that there was not a person able to meet the criteria to be appointed to the Forum.

It was further noted that the PRU will require a delegated budget in April 2013, however, this would only be for one term as it will be operated as an Alternative Provision Free School (Academy) from September 2013.

The Forum noted that there were still three vacancies on the Forum and it was agreed that the positions would be re-advertised.

The Forum agreed that the Constitution and Terms of Reference would be brought to a future meeting for review.

RESOLVED

That the inclusion of a provision in the Constitution and Terms of Reference for a PRU representative, not be agreed.

(Note: The meeting commenced at 6.00 p.m. and concluded at 7.20 p.m.)

Chairman

Dated